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IMPROVEMENTS IN COATINGS

This invention concerns improvements in coatings, and more especially concerns improvements in methods of coating metal oxides and the like onto metallic or non-metallic substrates.

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It is very well established to coat metal oxides, such as alumina, ceria, zirconia, etc, as single or mixed oxides, onto metal substrates and ceramic such as honeycomb through-flow catalyst supports, used in huge numbers in exhaust gas catalysts. This is generally achieved by admixing the metal oxide into an aqueous slurry together with suitable components including adhesion modifiers, of which the "Ludox" (Trade Mark) silica is an example, to form a washcoat slurry. The substrate is then dipped or drenched in the slurry, and fired to yield a high surface area base for the catalyst. The silica may form 50 wt% or more of the solids content of the slurry, and this clearly dilutes the interaction between the catalyst metals and the oxide, which is very important. There has not been significant improvement in these coating techniques for some 20 or 30 years, yet the design of exhaust gas catalysts is becoming more sophisticated and demanding, requiring new components such as zeolites and other multi-layers to be incorporated. We believe that traditional coating methods are failing to deal with new requirements, and in particular, traditional coating methods give problems in multi-layer coating.

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We have previously disclosed the use of polyelectrolytes to coat catalyst particles etc with zeolites formed simultaneously *in situ* (see EP 878 233). We have now discovered that polyelectrolytes can be used to pre-treat metal and ceramic substrates without such *in situ* formation of the zeolites, in a process in which one or more pre-formed metal oxides, including zeolites and the like, is deposited onto the substrate, and not only is a sound, even coating obtained without requiring dilution with adhesion modifiers, (but may include such adhesion modifiers) but the coating is especially suitable for the deposition of further coatings of similar or differing type.

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US 4806427 discloses a process for depositing a catalytically active material onto

NOT RECORDED

The term metal oxide includes zeolites of all types and of all Si to Al ratios, and includes modified, eg ion-exchanged zeolites, as well as "Silicate" and recently-available zeolite-type compositions where Ga and In or other suitable metals are incorporated into the zeolite framework structure and single or mixed oxides, for example selected from one or more of ceria, zirconia, magnesia, alumina and silica. The metal oxide is desirably in the form of an aqueous slurry, eg of about 40 wt% solids content of particles of the appropriate particle size; if necessary the metal oxide may be milled to disperse the metal oxide whilst simultaneously size reducing. The slurry may, but need not, include an adhesion modifier, and may include other components including catalytically active particles and solutions of catalytically active metals and/or promoters therefor, for example the catalytic component may be one or more of the platinum group metals.

The slurry is then suitably applied by any method to the polyelectrolyte-coated substrate, and is then suitably dried. A final stage is desirably firing, or calcining, to firmly deposit the oxide coating on the substrate. Before the final firing, however, additional slurries of oxide and/or other components may be deposited, to result in a continuous or thicker coating, or a multi-component series of coatings. If desired or necessary, a further polyelectrolyte layer may be applied, and one or more additional metal oxide or other coatings may be applied.

In an alternative embodiment, the polyelectrolyte is admixed with the slurry without a separate pre-coating step. Otherwise the process and materials considerations are fairly similar. This embodiment is expected to be particularly suitable for depositing a thin, even coating.

It is believed, although we do not wish to be bound by any theory, that the polyelectrolyte acts to reverse the charge on the substrate, thus permitting the slurry particles to adhere firmly, and we believe that upon deposition of a second coating, the polyelectrolyte is "re-activated" and serves to cause excellent adhesion of the second coating.

AMENDED SHEET

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It is believed that the present invention has significant and unexpected benefits in achieving good coatings on substrates that have previously been difficult to coat, and in particular permits sound and adherent two or multi-layer coatings.

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A particular embodiment of the invention (according to claim 8) provides a supported catalyst comprising a plate or monolith coated with a metal oxide, produced by the method of the invention.

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The present invention is illustrated by the following examples.

EXAMPLE 1

An aluminium plate is soaked with aqueous 4 wt% polyacrylamide solution at pH 9. The wet plate is then dried to leave a thin surface coating of polyelectrolyte. The coated plate is dipped into a standard zeolite x,y washcoat slurry as used in the

exhaust gas catalyst industry, containing 40 wt% zeolite, with the pH adjusted to between 8 and 9. The washcoat adheres to the plate, and the coated plate is removed and dried at 100 °C for 30 minutes. A further identical washcoat layer was then applied to deposit a desired thickness. The coated metal plate is then calcined at 400 °C for 2 hours, which
5 removes the polyelectrolyte residue. A photograph of the thus-coated plate ("A") is shown in the accompanying drawing page. For comparison, the identical procedure was followed without the polyelectrolyte treatment. Although a first coating appeared successful and even, a second coating caused the combined coating to dramatically peel; a photograph of the coated plate is shown as "B" in the drawing. It can readily be seen that the present
10 invention permits an even and continuous coating, whereas double coating without the polyelectrolyte results in flaking of the coating, and uneven, discontinuous coating.

Although the above Example utilised a 100% zeolite coating, other successful coatings can be applied with 50 wt% "Ludox" silica adhesion modifier, or any other
15 proportion.

EXAMPLE 2

Zeolite 13X on Aluminium Sheet

20 An aluminium sheet was coated with zeolite 13X (Zeolyst Int.) using a polyelectrolyte aqueous solution (5% of Allied Colloids BLO6272AQ/Alcostat167, SD n°0004568, and pH 9-10). After having fired the aluminium plate at 200 °C, it was anodised in a 15% sulphuric acid solution. The plate was then coated with a thin layer of polyelectrolyte, then four consecutive passes of zeolite 13X were applied with a total
25 weight gain of 0.57g over a surface of approximately 5 in² (32 cm²); this represented a loading improvement over 3 times greater than could be achieved in previous experiments. Between the third and the fourth passes, a second layer of polyelectrolyte was necessary. Finally, the sheet was calcined at 300 °C to burn off the polyelectrolyte.

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EXAMPLE 3

Zeolite 13X on Aluminium Monoliths

Two aluminium honeycomb monoliths of different cell density (400 and 200 cells

Static mixers (obtainable from Sulzer) made of "Fecralloy" metal were pre-heated to 900°C for 1 hour and soaked in 5% wt Alcolstat167 polyelectrolyte solution (Allied Colloids Ltd) at pH 9. The wet mixer is then dried to leave a thin surface polyelectrolyte

coating. The mixer is then dipped in a slurry containing 35wt% zeolite 4A with 5wt% platinum, and 2wt% Ludox silica (DuPont). Excess zeolite is removed by blowing the coated mixer through with 80psi of nitrogen. This helps to free any blocked channels in the mixer. The coated mixer is then dried at 120°C/8hrs, and calcined at 500°C/2hrs. The calcination step burns off the polyelectrolyte layer, and leaves the zeolite coating intact. In this case it results in a thick zeolite layer with coating density of 3.1ginch⁻³ throughout the mixer.

EXAMPLE 7

Alumina -based Catalyst on "Fecralloy" static Mixers

A static mixer was coated, using the same methodology as in Example 6 with 5% Pt, 0.1%Fe on alumina catalyst. This catalyst was mixed with 7% Dispersal binder (Condea), and made into a 35wt% aqueous washcoat. The resultant coating was observed to have good cohesion and integrity. A coating density of 3.7ginch⁻³ was achieved.

EXAMPLE 8

Zeolite H-ZSM-5 on Ceramic Monolith

A conventional cordierite monolith was successfully coated with H-ZSM-5 synthetic zeolite using the technique of Example 3. The test was repeated successfully using a mixture of zeolite and colloidal silica binder.

The invention may be modified by the skilled person without departing from the scope thereof.